

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5-10, 14-19, 23-28, and 32-36 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 7, 8, 10, 16, 17, 19, 25, 26, 28, 34, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,108,492 to Miyachi in view of U.S. patent 6,026,380 to Weiler et al. (herein "Weiler"). Claims 5, 6, 9, 14, 15, 18, 23, 24, 27, 32, 33, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miyachi in view of Weiler, further in view of U.S. patent 5,414,494 to Aikens et al. (herein "Aikens").

Addressing now the prior art rejections based on Miyachi and Weiler, and further in view of Aikens, those rejections are traversed by the present response.

The claims are amended by the present response to clarify that in the image forming device the communicating unit sends the log of the monitored data "through the network access". That subject matter is believed to be clear from the original specification, see for example Figure 1 showing a system with image forming devices having network access and the Sending Package 1600.

The features clarified in the claims are believed to clearly distinguish over the applied art.

Addressing first the primary reference to Miyachi, Miyachi does not disclose or suggest an image forming apparatus having network access, and thereby clearly does not disclose or suggest sending the log of the monitored data through a network access. Miyachi shows in Figure 1 the multifunction machine MFP 110a connected to a host 110b to a SCSI; but no network access is shown in Miyachi. As a result of such a structure in Miyachi the status of the MFP 110a can only be sent to the host 110b. Thereby, in Miyachi the MFP 110 cannot directly communicate with the network work station 150 and remote station 170.

Several of the previously recited claimed features also distinguish over the teachings in Miyachi, as was not properly recognized in the Office Action.

First, the claims recite a monitoring unit or monitoring operation that can “generate the log of the monitored data without any initial communication connection by the communication unit”, as specifically recited in independent claim 1 and as similarly recited in the other independent claims. Miyachi does not disclose or suggest that feature. In Miyachi the MFP 110 can only send status data if a host request is made, see step 570 in Figure 5 in Miyachi. The claims recite a different operation in that in the claims the monitoring is executed without a request from an external device.

Further, with respect to the further limitation of the monitoring “including monitoring at least one of a sequence, timing, or frequency of selecting of the plurality of operations”, that feature is believed to even further distinguish over Miyachi.

Miyachi, in contrast to the claimed features, is merely directed to being able to store status conditions of a multi-function device. However, does Miyachi not disclose or suggest monitoring a selection of a plurality of operations on an operation panel by a user including monitoring at least one of a sequence, timing, or frequency of selecting of the plurality of operations.

The claims are directed to a system, method, and computer program product that allows monitoring of how a user selects operations on an operation panel of an image forming device. That is, an image forming device includes an operation panel that has plural operations to be selected by a user. Those operations, as non-limiting examples, relate to selection of a number of copies, copy conditions, paper size selection, etc. An operation in the claimed invention is to monitor the selection of those operations by a user. That is, the claims are directed to monitoring when a user selects, e.g., a paper size operation, when the user selects a copy number operation, etc. One objective of the present invention is to

monitor such data so that a user's usage of an operation panel can be evaluated, so that the setup, layout, control, etc. of an operation panel of an image forming device can be improved.

Miyachi does not disclose or suggest any monitoring of operations on an operation panel of an image forming device that a user selects.

The basis for the outstanding rejection appears to be misinterpreting the claimed features relative to disclosure of Miyachi with respect to the above-noted objective and operation of the claimed invention. One basis for the rejection states "[c]learly a multifunction peripheral such as Miyachi's must monitor user input at the operation panel in order to effectuate the proper operations requested by the user".¹ The above statement in the Office Action reflects that the Office Action is not properly considering all the claimed features. Of course a multifunction device must recognize which operations on an operation panel a user selects so that the proper copying, scanning, faxing etc. operations are executed. That is not what the claims recite. Recognizing what selections an operator makes, however, does not *indicate that those same operations are monitored and logged*. Applicants respectfully submit it is clearly not the case that a multifunction peripheral such as Miyachi would monitor and log the user's input in an operation panel. The basis for the outstanding rejection is thereby misconstruing this connection of claimed features.

The outstanding rejection specifically cites Miyachi to disclose monitoring the selecting of the plurality of operations on the operation panel at column 5, lines 57-65. As noted above, those disclosed in Miyachi do not correspond to the claimed features.

At column 5, lines 27-30 Miyachi discloses that the multifunction peripheral includes a user input device 285 with button switches. However, the monitoring referred to at column 5, lines 57-65 in Miyachi is not directed to monitoring selections of those button switches, and particularly one of a sequence, timing, or frequency of selecting those buttons. More

¹ Office Action of August 21, 2006, page 3, prenumbered paragraph 10, lines 3-5.

specifically, at column 5, lines 57-65 Miyachi discloses monitoring the conditions of the multifunction peripheral and updating a status information table such as Table 1 shown in columns 6-7. However, Miyachi does not disclose or suggest monitoring which button switches are selected by a user. In fact, in reviewing Table 1 in Miyachi all the status information stored therein is directed to different status indications of the device itself, but is not directed to which selections on an operation panel a user selects. Miyachi merely discloses monitoring different status conditions of the device, but does not disclose or suggest monitoring which buttons on an operation panel a user selects.

Even more specifically, at column 5, lines 57-65 Miyachi refers to “monitoring the condition of the MFP and updating a status information table”. Miyachi does not disclose or suggest the claimed features of monitoring an input sequence of a selection of operations on an operation panel of a user, and such information is in fact of no interest to the device of Miyachi. Table 1 of Miyachi contains status conditions “[User] key original document size selection” and “[User] key paper size selection”. However, Miyachi does not disclose or suggest, nor have any reason, to monitor the sequence, timing, or frequency of selections of operations selected by a user. For example in Miyachi if a change is made from an original document size from 11 x 17 to letter size and a paper size selection from letter size to 11 x 17 or size enlargement, the input sequence and frequencies are not at all tracked.

In such ways, Miyachi is not directed to a device even similar to the claimed invention.

One basis for the outstanding rejection now appears to cite Weiler in combination with Miyachi with respect to the certain features noted above. In that respect, the outstanding rejection appears to cite Weiler to disclose monitoring at least one of a sequence, timing, or

frequency of selecting of a plurality of operations and to generate a log of the monitored data, citing Weiler at column 5, lines 57-65 and at column 4, lines 48-63.²

In reply to that basis for the outstanding rejection Applicants note Weiler also does not disclose or suggest the claimed features of sending a log of the monitored data through network access. The system of Weiler utilizes a serial port as shown in Figure 2, and does not send any data through a network access. Thus, Weiler does not cure that deficiency in Miyachi.

Moreover, Weiler does not cure the recognized deficiencies of Miyachi.

Column 5, lines 57-65 of Weiler are merely directed to claim 5, directed to secondary serial cables and the control of an enable switch. Those disclosures in Weiler are not seen to have any relevance whatsoever to the claimed features, and it is unclear on what basis those disclosures in Weiler are even cited.

At column 4, lines 48-63 Weiler discloses recording a log table of different copy events. However, again that teaching in Weiler is not directed to the claimed features of monitoring and keeping a log of at least one of sequence, timing, or frequency of selecting of the operations on an operation panel. Weiler discloses monitoring how copying is being executed, but the log in Weiler would not indicate what buttons on an operation panel of an image forming device the user has selected. Instead, in Weiler the execution of copy events is logged. Such features in Weiler are not directed to the claimed features and do not cure the discussed deficiencies in Miyachi.

Thereby, the claims as rendered are believed to clearly distinguish over Miyachi in view of Weiler.

² Office Action of August 21, 2006, page 4, prenumbered paragraph 13, lines 5-9.

Moreover, no teachings in Aikens were cited with respect to the above-noted features, nor are any teachings in Aikens believed to cure the above discussed deficiencies of Miyachi and Weiler.

In view of the presently submitted claim amendments and foregoing comments, Applicants respectfully submit the claims as currently written distinguish over the applied art.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

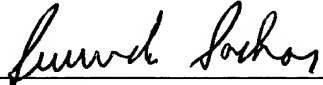
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